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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KUWAIT 001790

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FOR NEA/ARP AND PM

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [PGOV](#) [KU](#)

SUBJECT: KUWAIT TELLS DOD-STATE-NSC TEAM GCC CONSENSUS
NEEDED TO COUNTER IRANIAN THREAT

REF: A. KUWAIT 1624

[1](#)B. KUWAIT 1451

[1](#)C. KUWAIT 1449

Classified By: Ambassador Richard LeBaron for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: In May 14 meetings with National Security Bureau President Shaykh Sabah Al-Khaled and MFA U/S Al-Jarallah, a senior State-Defense-NSC team (DOD PDUSD Henry, State PM A/S Hillen, and NSC Senior Director Doran) reiterated the U.S. commitment to Gulf security, outlined the U.S. Gulf Security Dialogue (GSD) and discussed opportunities to strengthen defense and counter-proliferation cooperation, including the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), with Kuwait. Shaykh Sabah Al-Khaled and U/S Al-Jarallah reaffirmed the strength of U.S.-Kuwaiti relations and welcomed increased consultation on Iraq, Iran, terrorism, and Hamas. Shaykh Sabah Al-Khaled discussed a Kuwait strategy paper presented at the May 6 GCC Consultative Summit in Riyadh, as well as GCC agreement to send a high-level delegation to Iran. The Oman-led delegation will press for Iranian cooperation with the IAEA, UNSC, and international community. The sides also discussed Iraq, limiting Iran's regional influence, and encouraging Hamas to cooperate with the international community and open negotiations with Israel. End summary.

U.S. Commitment and the Gulf Security Dialogue

[1](#)2. (C) PDUSD Henry opened both meetings by re-iterating the U.S. commitment to Gulf Security and recognizing Kuwait's unique contribution in this regard. PDUSD Henry stated we were entering a critical stage for Gulf security due to Iran's efforts to develop a nuclear capability, and the U.S. would stand by its Gulf friends to deal with this threat. To bolster the security capacity of Gulf partners, A/S Hillen briefed the Kuwaiti leaders on the proposed Gulf Security Dialogue (GSD), which built on recent visits to the region by U/S Joseph and Counselor Zelikow, and which would be comprised of discussions on enhanced defense cooperation, Iraq, regional stability, energy security, counter-proliferation (CP), and counterterrorism/internal security.

[1](#)3. (C) On enhanced defense and CP cooperation, A/S Hillen urged greater collaboration between the U.S. and Kuwait and encouraged the GOK to consider upgrading its F-18s and missile/air defense capabilities, specifically through shared early warning and CENTCOM's cooperative integrated air defense program linked with a Patriot PAC III system. A/S Hillen stated such efforts will send a strong signal to Iran on Gulf states' resolve. A/S Hillen and the Ambassador

pressed the GOK on PSI, urging it to endorse PSI and send a representative to the Anatolian Sun exercise in Turkey and a Conference in Poland in June. A/S Hillen also urged the GOK to consider a PSI exercise in the Gulf this summer. Senior Director Doran discussed the U.S. Iran strategy, emphasizing the need to achieve a diplomatic solution by confronting Iran with a unified international community. This would avoid a future stark decision to either accept an Iran with nuclear weapons or go to war. A/S Hillen ended by seeking GOK initial thoughts on the possibility of initiating a ministerial-level conference between the GCC and the U.S. to discuss the GSD.

Kuwaiti Strategic Paper on GCC Coordination

14. (C) NSB President Shaykh Sabah Al-Khaled briefed the interagency team on the May 6 GCC Consultative Summit in Riyadh. He said Kuwait presented a strategic plan addressing security (Iraq, Iran, terrorism, and the consequences of a Hamas-led Palestinian Authority) and economic development. (Note: Ref A contains a version of the paper carried in the local press; Shaykh Sabah Al-Khaled confirmed that it was accurate and later passed an Arabic version which post is in the process of translating. End note.) The NSB Director noted differences in how GCC members want to deal with Iran, but stressed the need for a common approach.

15. (C) MFA U/S Al-Jarallah stressed the need for consultation and coordination as the most effective tool that a small country like Kuwait could use against "this stupid regime." It was essential the GCC send a clear message to Iran that its actions were damaging the region. This message would be delivered by an Oman-led delegation to demonstrate,

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even though Oman was not as worried about Iran, an agreed GCC position. The delegation will stress the necessity of Iranian compliance with IAEA decisions and cooperation with the international community. A/S Hillen welcomed the GCC Iran initiative and said the U.S. hoped the GCC delegation would encourage Iran to behave more responsibly, addressing not only the GOI's nuclear aspirations, but also other interference in the region.

Kuwait to Press Iranian FM on International Cooperation

16. (C) Shaykh Sabah Al-Khaled reported that Iranian FM Mottaki would visit Kuwait the week of May 21. He said Kuwait speaks frankly with Iran and has repeatedly told Iran there was no GOK objection to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, but Iran's nuclear activities must be in accordance with the IAEA. Al-Jarallah mentioned the possibility of parties exerting pressure on the regime, referring to signals from Rafsanjani during his April visit to Kuwait (and more so from his accompanying delegation) that they did not agree with the Iranian President's approach (ref B). He scorned the lack of substance in the Ahmadinejad letter to the President. He said in the long-term, Iran's youth would likely diverge from Iran's current direction. Shaykh Sabah Al-Khaled also mentioned anticipated visits by foreign ministers of Russia, China, and Germany. NSC Doran and A/S Hillen urged the Kuwaitis to pressure the Russians and Chinese on UNSC and international consensus on Iran. The NSB Director emphasized the need for UNSC permanent member consensus on Iran, without which the GCC would be at a distinct disadvantage.

17. (C) NSC Doran agreed on the need for a common position on Iran. He said Iran continued to elude international restrictions, going from uranium conversion to industrial enrichment and ignoring international controls. He briefed the GOK on EU-3 work on an incentives package to go along with a UNSC Chapter VII resolution. Iran must cooperate with the international community and recognize that the pursuit of

nuclear weapons does not enhance its security.

¶8. (C) Shaykh Sabah Al-Khaled advised the group that Kuwait would host in December (o/a December 11 - 12) a NATO-Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) meeting with the goal of bringing the other GCC states into the partnership. NSB Office Manager Shaykh Thamer Ali Al-Sabah added that the NATO-ICI meeting would also send a strong message to Iran. (Note: Shaykh Thamer advised the Ambassador that the GOK was planning the ICI meeting to take place just after the Institute of Strategic Studies meeting in December in Bahrain. He also said that IISS conference head Chipman had advised the GOK that Secretary Rice will attend the Bahrain meeting. End note.)

What's Good for Iraq is Good for the Region

¶9. (C) On Iraq, Shaykh Sabah Al-Khaled asserted Kuwait's support for the political process. A/S Hillen said the U.S. shared Kuwait's desire for a good outcome in Iraq and an Iraqi government not dominated by any element and free of Iranian influence. Al-Jarallah reported Kuwait had recently received Sunni delegations from Iraq, who reported abuse by Iraqi Shi'as in the south. He mentioned the GOK had received reports President Talabani had reached agreement with groups independent of the Ba'ath party and Al-Zarqawi on lessening the degree of violence (NFI). A/S Hillen urged Kuwait to decisively provide support for Iraq and the new government.

Assisting the Palestinian People, Not the PA

¶10. (C) Shaykh Sabah Al-Khaled noted the Saudi proposal to establish an international counterterrorism center in Bahrain and said greater cooperation and intelligence-sharing among GCC partners was needed. He also raised Israel- Palestinian issues and how to deal with Hamas. He said the GOK encouraged the Hamas-controlled PA to honor the Arab Initiative (from the Beirut Arab League summit) and the relevant UNSC resolutions (ref C). He said it is not a matter of simply sending money to the PA; donor governments must consider the appropriate way to transfer funds and how to ensure that financial assistance reached the Palestinian people. Al-Jarallah added that the GOK encouraged Hamas to open a dialog with Israel, the same message they had

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reportedly heard from Syrian President Bashar al-Asad. Kuwait further encouraged Hamas to honor the Quartet conditions and had recently heard that Hamas had decided to at least make a gesture towards honoring previous agreements, (the AL initiative), one of the Quartet conditions.

¶11. (U) U.S. Meeting participants:

Ambassador Richard LeBaron
Mr. Ryan Henry, Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy;
Dr. John Hillen, Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs;
Mr. Michael Doran, National Security Council Senior Director for Near East and North African Affairs;
Mr. Frank J. Ruggiero, State PM Chief of Staff;
Colonel Jennifer L. Graham, Military Assistant to the PDUSD;
and
Ms. Natalie E. Brown, Political Chief, Embassy Kuwait (notetaker).

¶12. (U) The delegation cleared this message.

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